THE CHURCH MONTHLY

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A Third Grade Builds a City

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The Lord Speaks to the Preacher

By Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick

THE prophet Ezekiel in his thirty-third chapter tells us what long ago the Lord said to a preacher. It was a disconcerting message. Did not the people come to hear him?' Indeed they did, and at the wells and in the market-place and at the doors of the houses, where the people sat, they said one to another, "Come, I pray you, and hear." And when the preacher spoke was he not responsively listened to? Indeed he was. They loved to hear him speak. He was to them, so the Lord told him, as "a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument."

Ezekiel, however, was unhappy about this situation. He did not wish to be a lovely song. He wished to be an appeal to a jury that would bring decision. He wished to be a trumpet that would launch a charge. He wanted his words to issue in work and his appeals in action.

Mr. William Jennings Bryan, on one of his campaigns for the presidency, spoke on free silver in a community where I was living. He had a grand night of it. The largest auditorium was packed to the doors and the enthusiastic crowd loudly cheered his witty sallies and his eloquent periods, but when it was over and, somewhat moved by the warm ovation offered him, he asked how many were going to vote his ticket, only four hands were seen. To that amiable company he had been but a lovely song of one that had a pleasant voice and could play well on an instrument.

So Ezekiel was not happy in his situation. They loved to hear him speak but nothing came of it, and because he was in earnest about some things that seemed to him important he was disappointed and chagrined.

Of course, in this regard preachers differ deeply. Epictetus, the Roman Stoic, tells us of Sophist philosophers in his day who would come down from their rostrums among their friends and say, "What did you think of me?" "Upon my life, Sir," a friend would say, "it was prodigious." "But, how did I express myself upon that subject?" "Which?" "Where I gave a description of *Pan* and the *Nymphs*." "Most excellently," the friend would say. So the Sophist teacher, as Epictetus pictures him, would go home to dinner in the seventh heaven of delight.

I suspect that every man in public place is sometimes tempted to such vanity. John Bunyan tells us that once he was complimented by a devotee. "It was a sweet sermon," said the flatterer, and said Bunyan, "Ay, the devil told me that before I was out of the pulpit."

Ezekiel was of Bunyan's sturdy breed and had his rugged reactions to personal praise. That is to say, first of all he was a patriot for a cause, deeply concerned about getting some things done, glorying in the thing he represented and stood for, and, therefore, in no mood to be flattered. A man who thus identifies himself with a cause is one of the most impressive sights that human life affords. A child is born, his individual self all there is to him, but somewhere a cause is looking for a spokesman, an enterprise seeking for a representative,

and some day—they are the red letter days of history—that cause and that growing personality come together and in each other are mutually fulfilled and glorified.

What would Luther have been without the Reformation or the Reformation without Luther? What would Washington have been without the new America or the new America without Washington? So the man and the cause come together like electricity shooting through carbon; for the carbon would be dull without the electricity and the electricity would be invisible without the carbon, but together they light up the world.

Now, the first result of such a wedding between a man and a cause is that you cannot flatter him any more. Think of trying to turn pretty compliments for Washington or Luther, if you were not standing for the thing they stood for! So Ezekiel was in no mood to be satisfied with praise. He and his companions were exiles in Babylon. Ten thousand of the foremost citizens of Jerusalem, the hope of any future Judaism might ever have, had been transported across the desert to the strange, alluring life of Mesopotamia. There, in that alien civilization, the finest hopes of Israel were perilously at stake. In a situation like that a true preacher is either a compass, keeping true direction amid stormy seas and helping people to sail straight, or else he is nothing. Certainly, he does not wish to be a lovely song.

That is not ancient history and this morning we turn back in imagination to Ezekiel in old Babylon only to see how apt to our case his experience was.

In the first place, Ezekiel was tremendously in earnest about keeping his people from the defilement of the surrounding paganism. There in Babylon, their God apparently defeated by other gods, those Jews were living in the most wealthy, the most licentious, the most brilliant civilization of their day. Its allurement was terrific. Think what it must have meant to a young Jew, when the festival of some great Babylonian god came round and all the land was riotous with feasting, to see the gorgeous processions sweep up to the temples and to hear the cries of the crowds summoning him to join! How dull and tame, tawdry and unexciting must have seemed the traditions of his defeated nation!

When Ezekiel preached he had this upon his conscience. He wanted his people kept true to the best ideals of their homeland. They loved to hear him talk like that. When anyone is far from home, news of it is sweet, and Ezekiel's words were poetry, reminiscent of cherished days in the holy land. But all the time the paganism of Babylon was dragging them down morally.

Translate that from Mesopotamia to Manhattan. How much of our religion is of that kind! It is lovely; it is poetry; we enjoy it. How beautifully we dress it up in churches such as this. We come to hear it preached. It has overtones of idealism and echoes of reminiscence that are beautiful, but all the time we are living in a wealthy, worldly, carnal, mammon-loving civilization. Its allurement is terrific.

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As to be hated needs but to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

So religion in New York cannot be poetry alone. As of old, pure religion is visiting the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and keeping oneself unspotted from the world.

There is no need to enlarge on so obvious a matter except to express amazement that so many people come to the minister's confessional in some such mood as this: The good life, they say, does not work out successfully; the world commonly gives its prizes to the crafty and the crooked; those who join the licentious current seem to be happier in the end; it is hard standing against the drift; it is much easier to let yourself go. What is the matter? they seem to imply; we had supposed that virtue

is its own reward and that goodness pays wages on a Saturday; what is the matter with your Christian gospel that so often even being decent is hard and the prizes go to pagans? To which I answer, What soft, sentimental view of human nature must lie behind such thinking as that! Since when has it been easy in any Babylon to live according to one's best ideals? Since when has it been simple, as the New Testament puts it, to be a saint in Cæsar's household? Are we still bemused and hypnotized by mid-Victorian optimism so that we think that all is well with the world, that progress is inevitable and that as on an escalator we all are being swept with the crowd into excellence of life? On the contrary, the level of human nature is low, ignorantly, often brutally, low, and in every realm excellence has to be sacrificially fought for. Any preacher worth his salt, then, whether it be Walter Damrosch trying to get people to love excellence in music instead of the cheap stuff that fills the air, or a Christian preacher wanting to keep his people from being chameleons, taking color from the low life they crawl across, and to make them rather creative lovers of moral excellence, every worthy preacher is trying to call his people up above the dead level of the world.

In politics I still manage to believe in democracy, with all its blunders, but in spiritual life I plead for aristocracy: the love of excellence. And against any Babylonian background excellence is hard.

Do you wonder, then, that a Christian minister sometimes throws up his hands in dismay at what he sees even in his own congregation, while kindly people take him for a very lovely song of one who has a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument?

Frederick W. Robertson of Brighton, England, one of the noblest preachers of the nineteenth century, wrote this once: "I wish I did not hate preaching so much, but the degradation of being a Brighton preacher is almost intolerable . . . All I say and feel is, that by the change of times the pulpit has lost its place." Well, I wonder if from the days of Paul, who talked about "the foolishness of preaching," every preacher at some time has not felt that way.

The reason is not, however, as Robertson seemed to think, that preaching is going out. On the contrary, everybody is preaching. Movies preach; magazines and newspapers preach; books by the millions preach. From Monday morning till we get back here on the following Sunday we have been preached at all the time by the multitudinous voices of this age. Do not try to make the familiar, cheap escape, saying that you are done with preaching. You are not done with preaching. There is nothing that we do more than listen to the preaching that floods in upon us from every side all the days of the week. Much of it calls us back to the dead level of the democratic average. And it is a dead level! Oh, for a nobler breed to rise in answer to a nobler appeal as long ago in Babylon Ezekiel created a remnant which survived the impinging paganism and became seed corn for the new community on Zion. For he did that. In the end he was so far from being merely a lovely song that now, when Babylon is dust, we have the Old Testament—yes, and the New—as a gift from the remnant which Ezekiel saved out of Babylon.

This leads us to a second matter of more than ancient significance in that old experience. Ezekiel was not easily to be misled by light compliments because he was in earnest about building a fellowship of kindred souls among the exiles. He was a churchman and his lifework was the creation of a community that should carry over to the new days of Zion. How else could the fine ideals he wanted kept be kept or the tasks he wished achieved be wrought without a cooperative fellowship? So in Babylon he created a community and now, when those temples once so gorgeous are of interest to archeologists alone, out of the best work of the exile has come the syna-

gogue and out of the synagogue the church. He had a task on his hands. He did not want to be a lovely song.

Translate that from Mesopotamia to Manhattan. There are, I suspect, few places in the world today where it is harder than here to build an effective Christian community, and few places where it is more needed. Amid the pressure of this town how can we keep our fine ideals or do our Christian work without the support of a contagious fellowship? Wherefore, will some of you who commonly throng this church listen without offense while we tell you frankly what we think? We know some of you too well to be greatly complimented by your presence here. You have been in New York City for years. You go wherever there is entertainment that pleases you. You have your favorite actors, your favorite musicians, your favorite golf-courses, your favorite preachers. You flit from one to another. You are the city's humming birds who fly from place to place and light nowhere. You are genial, kindly, complimentary, polite. You wish us well. We understand. You even believe, in a fashion, in Christianity. That is to say, you are pleased with it when it is well presented, as you are when Gabrilowitsch plays a Chopin nocturne.

Some of you, however, after many years in this city, have not lifted earnest hands to help make the church a citadel against the impinging paganism. After many years the church letters of some of you are still in the country villages where you were born. You are not giving time or strength to Christian tasks in this city or putting your shoulders personally or financially under Christian burdens. Bear with me, I beg of you, while we who are trying to make the church a potent force for good living, in a time and place where good living is not easy, say what we think. Organizing an effective Christian community is not poetry. It is one of the hardest things that any men can set their hands to.

A missionary friend of mine from the Philippines once said to me that he would far rather be a missionary there than a minister here—much easier! Look out across this city. Estimate the cross currents of its conglomerate population, the babel of its tongues, the clash of its creeds and cultures, the appalling contrasts of its wealth and poverty, its mad speed, its restless allurements, and see if we do not need here communities where a man's soul can be rekindled with the fire from off the altar. Understand, then, how we feel when you smile kindly on us as though we were a lovely song of one who has a pleasant voice. Genial, kindly, complimentary, polite church tramps—won't you settle down somewhere and go to work? If you wish to come here, welcome, but go somewhere and belt your life into the Christian tasks of this needy city!

That leads us to a third matter. Ezekiel was not easily fooled by superficial compliments, because he had a patriotic, social cause upon his conscience. He did not think that God intended that forever they should be exiles; Zion would be rebuilt; a social cause had captured him; he was a patriot for a restored nation in a holy land. Some people talk as though the social gospel were modern. Modern? In our tradition it began with the Hebrew prophets. It certainly was central in Jesus, who said, "Seek you first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness." The fact is rather that we moderns have been very timid about it in comparison with our fathers in the faith who started out to turn the world upside down.

Remember John Calvin, putting his hand on the government of Geneva and transforming it into his image, or John Knox braving the wrath of Mary, Queen of Scots, and from his Edinburgh pulpit thundering out the principles of a Christian government. Go to a man like that and tell him that he is a lovely song of one who has a pleasant voice. Can you not see him bristle? He was rather a hammer pounding in pieces the enemies of the Reforma-

tion in state as well as church. No, the social gospel is not modern. There never has been any genuine Christianity without it one way or another.

How clearly and courageously that note needs to be sounded in America today! How far I am from being a communist you know well. I love personal liberty too much to find that system tolerable. But any man who is not shaken out of his self-complacency by what is going on in Russia simply is not thinking. For underneath that prodigious revolt against the Tsar's régime and running through the cruelties and suppressions that have marked its course, is one major matter: millions of men and women have caught the vision of a new social order where it shall be well with the common man, and are living and, if need be, are ready to die for it as if life's major meaning were the chance to make the dream come true. When one turns from that to this country, is it not the lack of a compelling social ideal and the lack of a profound patriotic devotion to it that most dismays us? How can we as a nation be so apathetic in the face of the economic tragedy, the political stupidity and crookedness, the ascendent criminality that surrounds us? We never will conquer communism simply by denouncing it. We will conquer communism only by surmounting it with a similar devotion to our social ideals of economic justice and public service.

Where, then, are the dedicated brains that will forget self and think for the commonweal, and the aroused public spirit that will be determined to build here a saner, cleaner, and juster social order? No man with intelligence can possibly identify what we have now with the Kingdom of God. Forty-five million so-called Christians in the United States, to say nothing of the rest, ought to be able to think of something better than this.

The fact is, my friends, that the communists in Russia are more sacrificially in earnest about what they want than we are about what we ought to want. Oh, for a nation that would shake itself free from its stupid self-complacency and its materialistic selfishness, and, laying its hands upon its opportunity—the most magnificent I think on earth today—would build here a better social order! And in such a time can you not imagine what a Christian preacher feels when thus he is taken for a very lovely song of one who has a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument?

More than once in this sermon I said Ezekiel when I was thinking Christ. They even tried complimenting him. A sentimental woman said to him once, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the breasts which thou didst suck." Jesus came back like lightning, "Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it." An obsequious auditor said to him once, "Good Teacher." Jesus said, "Why callest thou me good? none is good save one, even God." Do we think we can flatter him? Did he endure his agony and bloody sweat and carry his cross up Calvary just that we should make music and poetry of it down here?

Did some of us come in this morning as though to say to Christ, Thou art a lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice? Oh hush! "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, . . . but he that doeth the will of my Father."

PRAYER

Eternal God, help us that in a great time we may not live trivial lives, that in a serious day we may not dedicate ourselves to flippant ends. Make us, we beseech Thee, builders of the City of God. Amen.

Dr. Fosdick preached the foregoing sermon on April 3, 1932.

Prayer

By Harry Emerson Fosdick

ETERNAL Spirit, not far off but deep within us all, be Thou to us a living Presence in this hour of prayer. Be not in our thought a king upon a distant throne or a magician who by sleight of hand shall give us gifts, or a far off individual in the sky. Be Thou to us the Love in Whom we live and Who lives within our souls. Be Thou to us the Spirit from Whom we come, to Whom we belong, and in Whose service is our peace. Make our hearts Thy sanctuary and let Thy Presence shine in excellence and beauty, in faith and hope, in dignity and usefulness of thought and fineness of desire. Be to us a fountain underneath the ground of our own souls and give us grace to clear away the clutter that impedes Thy rising there, that we may know in this hour of prayer the God within.

As thus Thou dost arise within our hearts, give us grace to take fresh account of our benedictions. Because some days are dark we prize the more the sunshine. Because the winter has held the earth in its hands we glory the more when spring comes. Because we have reason to be downcast and sad we would the more rehearse our blessings and rejoice in our happiness. For friendship, for the deep, spiritual values still remaining when outward things depart, for the beauty of the world and the mysteries of harmony, for the truths that undergird us, the faiths that sustain us, the hopes that comfort us, blessed be Thy name.

Life us up to see that our life does not consist in the abundance of the things that we possess, and give us a new joy in things that are deep and simple, inward and real.

As thus Thou dost expand our joys, enlarge also our sympathies. Forgive us that when we think of Thy human family we think so much of the lands of their birth, the hues of their skin, and the forms of their creed. Forgive us our prejudice. Help us to rise into a loftier altitude with broader horizons of intelligence and sympathy to see and understand that Thou hast made of one all nations that dwell upon the face of the earth.

Especially we beseech Thee for all who work for peace, for all counselors in favor of disarmament, for all who seek juster economic life and who labor to purge our governments from corruption and our societies from shame, for men and women in high place or amid humble responsibilities whose hearts seek first Thy kingdom. Upon them let Thy wisdom rest and in them let courage come in this day of need.

We beseech Thee that Thou wilt lay Thy hand upon all institutions working for the leadership of the future, especially upon our schools, colleges, and churches. O God, we lay before Thee our desires for this new generation. Forgive us that we hand on to youth a world which our elder hands have left so bitter, so distraught, so impoverished. We beseech Thee that there may come to the new generation some grace of insight and strength of heart from traditions which we have not altogether defaced. We pray that new truth may be discerned and new adventures dared so that they may leave this earth a more decent place for the family of God. Upon some young life here this day lay Thou Thy hand in high vocation, and call him or her into the leadership of the future.

O God, how can we pray rightly for the world when our own hearts are not right? Comfort us in our distresses; steady us when the tempest beats upon our house. Give us deep convictions. Give us undiscourageable hope. Give us honesty, integrity, sincerity, unselfishness, and so bless us with the Spirit of Christ. Amen.

Special Week of Penitence and Prayer

The first week in October has been set aside as a special period of penitence and prayer by the action of the heads of twenty-six of the leading Protestant bodies. Emphasis is being laid upon using the regular services of the week for a special emphasis upon penitence and prayer and also upon encouraging a personal and family observance by church members. Each denomination is expected to carry forward the observance in accordance with its own customs and traditions and without any attempt to secure a standardized procedure.

A series of suggested topics for meditation and prayer for each day of the week, Oct. 2-8, has been prepared. They are designed to focus attention upon the attitude of the individual, emphasizing the fact that all our social and economic problems are, in the last analysis, problems of personal motives.

The general themes for the successive days are as follows: Sunday, The Examined Life; Monday, Penitence; Tuesday, Confession; Wednesday, Acknowledging God's Sovereignty; Thursday, Prayer; Friday, Consecration; Saturday, Discipleship.

A pamphlet including the call, the topics for meditation and prayer for each day and suggestions for practical procedures in securing the largest spiritual value from the observance has been issued by the Commission on Evangelism of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, 105 East 22nd Street, New York, and can be had upon request.

The call for the observance of the week, as issued by the officials of the cooperating denominations, is as follows:

"To the Pastors and People of the Churches of the United States of America.

"Greeting: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

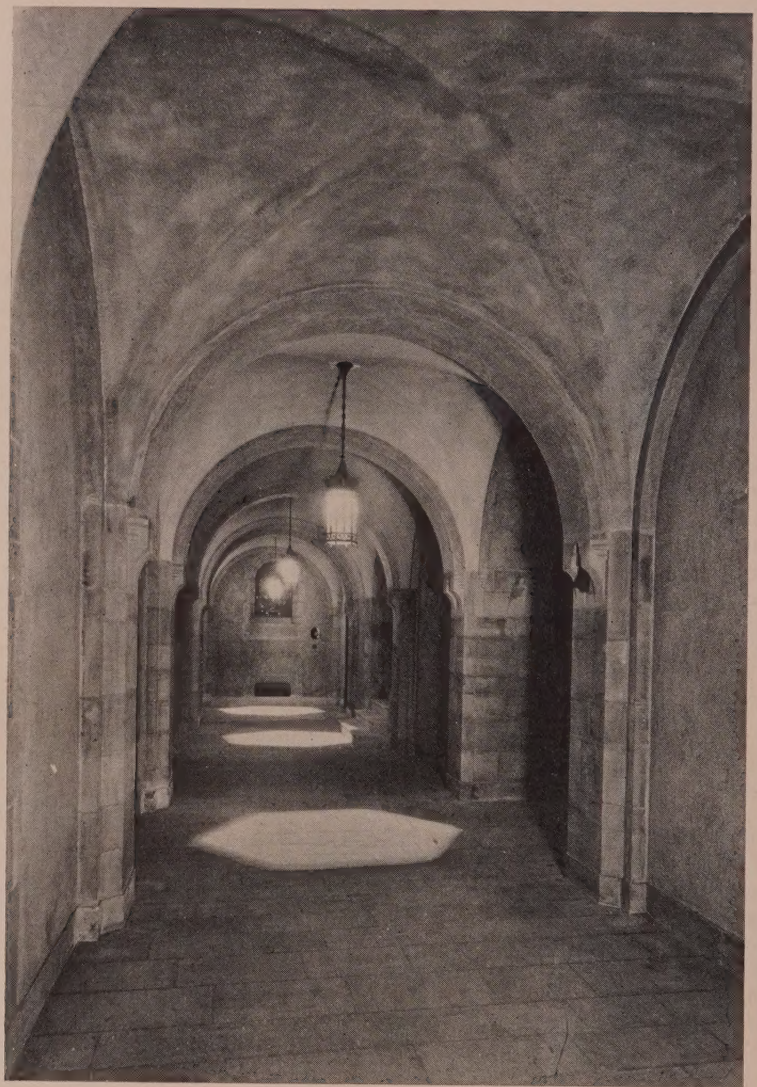
"We address you on urgent business. The Church and the nation face a grave and serious situation. There is on every hand physical and mental suffering. This condition has long continued and no one can point the way of escape. Our best men are powerless before the devastating effects of commercial distrust and moral confusion. While we long for the return of prosperity, we pray rather for the correction of those causes of distress without which prosperity may prove to be other than a blessing.

"In many areas within the Church there is urgent desire for a religious awakening. On every hand thoughtful Christians feel that the root of our trouble is moral and spiritual. All laws are moral laws and, while we cannot trace their working, of one thing we are sure, that out of the past has come the present. We reap what we sow.

"We have worshipped at the shrines of false gods—the false god of mammon, money, things; the false god of power, production, bigness; the false god of nationalism, individualism, social injustice; the false god of pleasure, amusement, disregard for things and times sacred; the false god of success, high living, careless thinking; the false god of magic, reaping where we had not sowed, profiting where we had not toiled.

"The Church dares not stand aside and whisper peace either to itself or to the nation when there is no peace. Only a national turning to God in repentance and moral restitution seeking His divine forgiveness will restore the spiritual health of our people. We have looked for signs of repentance and the fruits thereof. We have not seen them. On every hand there is a demand for prosperity but little evident desire to return to the ways of faith and prayer. The times are giving us moral discipline. God waits on man's response. No

(*Continued on page* 479)



Assembly Hall Corridor

The Latchstring

Nothing new under the sun. Visitors to the Riverside Church ask many strange questions and register surprise at many things they find here. There is no one practice in our current church experience which occasions more comment than that of issuing tickets to church members for admission on Sunday morning. Many a visitor, when he discovers that such a practice is in vogue, expresses complete surprise in the words, "I never heard of such a thing."

But, as a matter of fact, in many churches in this country where they have unusually large congregations, resort has been had to some such device. We have tried to keep our plan from being in any way tainted with commercialism. The people who are entitled to cards of admission to the church get them on the basis of membership and without regard to the financial contribution which they may make to our work. The following paragraph, taken from the calendar of the City Temple, London, in Joseph Parker's day, will suggest to what lengths churches have gone in trying to meet a situation somewhat similar to that which obtains in the Riverside Church at the present time.

"Applications for Sittings may be made after any public service. Area Sittings, 7s. 6d. Gallery from 2s. 6d. to 7s. 6d. per quarter. Arrangements can also be made for the half-quarter, and even for a Single Service. THE SINGLE SERVICE Cards (sixpence each) may be had on application to the Sexton any day, except Sunday. These Cards admit by Seatholders' door. Conditions stated on the card itself. Persons desirous to secure QUIET ENTRANCE to the building are thus enabled to do so."

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The joint reception of the Woman's Society and the Women's Bible Class, which is a yearly affair, takes place Monday, the seventeenth, on the ninth floor, Mrs. Fosdick, Mrs. Carder and Mrs. Hellstrom being the guests of honor. It is an excellent opportunity to meet old friends and make new acquaintances, and means much to the work of the winter and the life of the church. Old members and new members are most cordially invited to come.

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A Pastoral Problem. It is not possible for the ministers of a church such as the Riverside Church has come to be to meet the pastoral opportunities and obligations in anything like the degree of thoroughness which we would like to exercise. Each of the ministers of the church is occupied with specific duties in a particular field for which he is primarily responsible. The demands of these respective spheres of action are such as to preclude the possibility of the more leisurely and intimate pastoral contact which we ordinarily associate with the ministers' activities. Whether this condition is ideal or not would appear to be beside the mark, since there is no way really of changing the conditions of city life which have created it. Difficult as it is, however, it is aggravated a bit in the summer time by the scattering of our people to their summer homes and along the diverse routes of travel which they follow in vacation time.

To some of our church families there have come losses by death during this past summer and the consequent calls for the cooperation of the church in arranging for funeral services, interments, and the many related matters with respect to which we are able to be helpful if we are called upon. We want our members to feel free to call upon the

ministers for any assistance and help we can give. The church office is prepared to recommend a funeral director with whom we have been working for many years, and whose courteous, reasonable and responsible service may be depended upon. If when death comes to some member of a family, and advice in this matter is needed, be perfectly free to ask the church office immediately for the name, telephone number and address of the funeral director who is associated with us in this capacity.

If the circumstances connected with the funeral service make it desirable that the body repose somewhere other than the home before or after the service, while waiting to send it out of town or for a delayed burial in a nearby cemetery, we want you to know that the Christ Chapel, the little room off the Narthex where the Hofmann canvas, "Christ in Gethsemane," hangs, is available to you for just this purpose. Frequently in New York it is not desirable or even possible for a body to be kept in the hotel, rooming house, or home where death has occurred for twenty-four hours or such a matter before or after a funeral service. Recourse is ordinarily had in such cases to the funeral parlors of the undertaker or funeral director. It is under such circumstances as might lead one to turn to the so-called "funeral parlor" that we offer the Christ Chapel.

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Women's Bible Class. A series entitled "Studies in Religious Experience" will be given at the regular sessions of the Class on Sunday mornings in their Ninth Floor room from Oct. 2nd to Nov. 20th by Mrs. Mary Ely Lyman. Mrs. Lyman will discuss on successive Sundays: "Abraham. A Story of Faith in Religious Experience." "Moses. An Epic of Leadership." "Amos. Social Justice in Religious Experience." "Isaiah. A Contrast Between Faith and Fear." "Psalms. Songs of Religious Experience." "Job. Suffering in Religious Experience." "Jesus. The Measure of the Stature of Fullness." "Paul. More than Conqueror."

The Class has been active in many directions throughout the summer months. Mrs. Eddy, the Executive Secretary, taught a Sunday morning class in the church during the time the Summer School was in session. An increasing number of women of the church and congregation are finding the activities of the Class of real interest to them and through its friendly contacts are becoming a part of the church life.

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Men's Class Topics. Sunday mornings during October and November, Dr. Carder will be addressing the Men's Class on a series of topics under the general title "Revelations of Reality: Growing Up with Jesus." At the opening session on Oct. 2, the subject will be, "The Boy Jesus Sees God."

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Men Acquire a Cabin. The Men's Class have taken a lease to a cabin in the Bear Mountain Park. It is designed to be a base for groups of campers and hikers who would be interested to spend weekends or a day or two now and then in the Bear Mountain preserve. The detailed scheme for the use of the cabin has not yet been arranged but already much enthusiasm has been shown in the large group of men who for the past few years have taken advantage of every possible opportunity to enjoy the woods and mountain trails of the Bear Mountain Park.

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Outside Groups. During the course of most any given week in the regular church year, approximately five hundred people use the gymnasium facilities of the Riverside Church. Another five hundred will be found to have been engaged at one time or another during that same week in bowling.

Among these friends will be basket ball teams of neighboring institutions, from other churches and organizations who have been in competition with our Men's Class basketball team. Bowling teams from banks, insurance offices, business houses, will have been competing with the bowling team of the men's organizations of the Riverside Church. Groups of boys and young men from various parts of Harlem and this section of New York City will have been using the gymnasium under the direction of their own leader, as is regularly the case with young men from the Harlem Y. M. C. A. under the leadership of Mr. Fred Thompson, their Secretary.

The building is more than two years old now, and we have been dealing with friends from various parts of the city rather intimately and constantly since the beginning of our work. We confess that in our conversations about our program there crept in very naturally the term "outside groups" whereby we designated any group that did not come up out of the church or the Church School directly. We find that designation, however, to be increasingly embarrassing to us. Our terminology, as applied to these people, is rapidly undergoing a change. We don't think of them any more as outside groups but part of the church family. And this has come about without any attempt on our part to proselytize them or without there necessarily having been any definite change in our formal attitude or their formal attitude. Just the usual and human experience of people who have done things together and who have shared things together arriving at a feeling of friendliness and mutual understanding and confidence. So truly has this taken place here that as we open our fall work and look toward the activities of the winter we realize that there are no "outside groups" using facilities of the Riverside Church. Our only hope is that we are as much on the inside with them as we assure them that they are on the inside with us.

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Our Teaching Staff. We find Mr. Hellstrom particularly happy this fall over the large number of members of the Church School faculty of last year who are returning to the city and available again this year. In a new School project such as ours here in the Riverside Church, the assembling of an adequate faculty has been a task of great importance. Since so many of these friends who teach the children of our families are professionally engaged during the week in teaching, we are likely to be subject to a rather heavy over-turn from year to year because of removals from the city. At least, this was what we were afraid might happen and what we dreaded the more as we came to realize the high quality of leadership which these particular teachers were giving. Now we are encouraged to find that one more element in the life of the Riverside Church which we had feared might have a temporary or casual side to it turns out to be permanent and stable.

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Week of Prayer

(*Continued from page* 475)

social or political revival can come out of spiritual destitution, and no national awakening can arise out of religious indifference. The only adequate way is the way of Christ and the Cross.

"We therefore call upon our people to give themselves by an act of will, personally and corporately, in penitence and prayer to Almighty God. And in order to secure the spirit of fellowship in united intercession, we set apart the week beginning Oct. 2, 1932, as a time when pastors and people shall search their hearts and conduct and by personal dedication and public services appointed to meet the need of the hour discover for themselves and for the nation the way to peace and power."

Interracial Friendship and World-Mindedness in the Church School

By Jeanette E. Perkins

THOSE sound like large words to use in connection with small children, but the activities of groups seeking for a better understanding of the American Indian; studying the peoples of the world to find the likenesses which make us one great family; and working to give some Chinese friends an idea of our New York City would seem to point toward what these words stand for.

Bacone College is a familiar name to a certain fourth-grade class, and a certain responsibility toward it lies heavily on its conscience. It was Princess Ataloa, from the college, who first aroused an interest in this group in the education of the American Indian. The children had long known and been fascinated by the race through its feathered regalia, its life in the open, and—alas—its war-cries and battles exploited in colorful but undiscriminating fiction.

But it was as real people, not story-book characters, that they came this year to know and appreciate them, people who have been unfairly treated, people who for all their knowledge of Nature, their skill in design and color work, their fine ideas about living and about the Great Spirit, want "book learning" and need schools as we do ourselves.

Ataloa started the new appreciation, and stories from Eastman's *My Indian Boyhood,* and other sources deepened it, until the term "Indian" had such a different meaning to them that the same children who a year before delighted in tomahawks and war-cries, now reproved another who unthinkingly referred to some boys as "wild Indians." "Indians aren't wild," they declared reproachfully.

In the course of their study this class undertook two ambitious enterprises. One was the "adoption" of an Indian orphan, or the raising of two hundred dollars to pay for a year's care and schooling. Obviously this was too much for fifteen nine-year-old children to handle alone, but they were resourceful. They prepared earnest speeches on the need for help in this enterprise and delivered them before the Women's Class, their own Junior Assembly, and various classes in the Primary Department.

Convincing posters, showing appreciation of Indian designs and symbols, appeared on every bulletin board, proclaiming to all who ran or read that this class was dead in earnest about its adopted child, and needed money, not only this year, but indefinitely! As they pointed out, how would you like it to have somebody adopt you one year and drop you the next? With the help of other classes, they raised $72 toward their goal of $200 and plan to continue their campaign during the coming year.

The second undertaking in connection with their study was that of writing and presenting a play which would give their audience their own new appreciation of the Indian's kinship with Nature, his dependence on the Great Spirit, his courage and generosity, his eagerness for an education. Page 481 shows the dedication of an Indian baby in the first scene in this play.

In the third grade the children did not limit themselves to America, but traveled the world over. Each child chose a different country and tried to express through some art form a bit of the spirit of that country. Paintings, drawings, scrapbooks and scenes made from clay and cardboard, colored

A FOURTH GRADE GIVES A PLAY OF THEIR OWN MAKING

sponges, or papier mâché made an interesting exhibit at the end. Sometimes it was through a scene depicting characters or events which contributed to the world's good, such as Camp Lazear, with Walter Reed working on the yellow fever problem. A series of pictures of Jesus represented Palestine. One boy had the idea of representing Germany through a scene with Bach at the piano—an interesting idea if it had been accomplished.

Some of the scenes were merely characteristic of the country: a Mexican pinata, a French marionette theatre, an African village. The last may be seen in the photograph of the children in one of their work periods (page 482). The village is at the extreme right, while the maker of the marionette theatre sits with her back to the camera.

Some of the questions about "our countries" to which the research, discussions and stories told in class contributed answers were: What are the people like? How do they dress? What kind of food do they eat? What crops do they raise? What kind of industries do they have? What are their houses like? How do they travel? Are many of the people sick? Do they have many doctors? Do they have schools? Do the people have enough to eat? Who are the famous people in your chosen country? What do the people think about God?

The class's own summary tells

What We Found Out About the World

We found that there are many countries and many peoples in the world. That people are both *different and alike.*

That they have *different* homes, food, languages, flags, countries, pictures and toys.

That people are *alike* because everywhere is found kindness, love, religion. Everybody needs to eat, sleep, play and work.

We found out that there are many places in the world like China, India, Africa, where many people never have enough to eat. In other countries there is more than enough, and food is wasted.

In some countries, like China, India, Africa, there are many diseases and very few trained doctors. In other places, like the United States, Germany, Japan, there are many trained doctors.

In many parts of the world the children never have a chance to go to school. These things seem unfair. We can't think "the earth is the Lord's" when things are so uneven and people are so unhappy. We think that if a country has something that will help other countries, it should share it with others. . . . .

We found many people who thought things were unfair in the world, and who tried to help change things so people would have a happier time.

Dr. Albert Schweitzer studied medicine, left his home in Germany, went to Africa to help Africans who were sick. He is living in Africa now.

Dr. Fred Shepard went to Turkey years ago to cure sick people. Even robbers and brigands came to love him when they were treated in his hospital.

Dr. Wilfred Grenfell went from England to Labrador. He has a boat hospital which sails among the islands, and sick fishermen come to be cured.

Dr. Walter Reed went to Cuba and worked very hard to discover the cause of yellow fever. He showed people how they could keep mosquitoes from breeding and so prevent this awful fever.

Dr. Hideyo Noguchi, a Japanese physician, carried on experiments trying to find out what germ caused yellow fever and a serum or vaccine to help a patient who had the fever.

Sam Higginbottom felt sorry because many people in India had to live on two or three cents a day and so were always hungry. He studied farming and went to India to try to help the Indian farmer to grow more food.

A THIRD GRADE STUDIES THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD

A symbolical chart (at the left in the picture) brought to the class by the teacher and interpreted and added to by the children is described thus:

"Our chart has a blue circular field outside; this is for all the countries of the world. We have placed the flags of our countries on here. Inside the blue are small circles of different colors for all the different colored people of the world. At the center is a white circle which we said was for God because he is invisible and we do not know what he looks like, and because white is made up of all the colors. We de-

cided to put two verses on our chart. *The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein* we put on the white at the center. *Ye are all brothers* forms a circle around the outside of the blue."

One activity in the Church School had an interesting connection with China through the personality of the leader. A year ago Miss Jennie Hsu, who was associated with this church during the years she was in America, and assisted in the work of the church school, returned to China. She had been helping in the kindergarten that year, and when the children knew that she was going back to China, they sent a gift of a doll to the kindergarten children of the Nankai Primary School of Tientsin.

Last spring we were surprised and delighted to receive a packet from that same group, first-grade children, then, addressed to the children who had sent them the doll. These children, too, of course, were now first-grade children, and old enough to appreciate the packet of surprises. First there were photographs of the Chinese children playing with *our doll*. But the doll had clothes which we never had sent, and was living in a house which we certainly had not given them. Then there were letters from the children and from the teacher, Miss Marjorie Rankin.

Besides the letters and pictures there were two gifts which roused intense interest. They were booklets about two inches square, made of small sheets of paper sewed together. One of them was a Chinese alphabet, a letter in picture writing on each page. It was made for our doll, so that he might learn to read! Then, because the doll must also know figures, and the days of the month, there was a calendar the children had made for the month of October! These two booklets will be treasures for our Primary curio cabinet, as well as the letter in Chinese characters and the pictures.

Miss Rankin's letter, showing the possibilities of international friendship which the gift of a doll presents, is interesting in itself. The fact that she is a member of Riverside Church makes her letter of special interest to the MONTHLY.

"You will see from the two letters enclosed that the doll sent has been a real education to the children of our first grade. It has also done its little bit toward international good feeling. (Much needed during the terrible crisis that China is going through just now.) The children talk often about their American friends. I don't think I have ever seen a present more thoroughly appreciated. It has motivated most of the work for half a year. They have no classes, but the teacher tries to touch on all phases of life. Their discussions are often about dolly. When should dolly go to bed? Why? How much air should dolly have? How can we make dolly's home pretty? How can we keep dolly and dolly's house clean? What kind of clothes should dolly have? And so on, through many, many discussions. It has been a real source of joy and education.

"During the whole half year most of the writing has also come from an interest in the doll. The doll's story books are quite interesting, and the arithmetic books, too. They are keeping careful track of the growth of the wheat (planted in window-boxes of the doll's house) and writing that up. It was the idea of one of the boys in the class that they measure it every three or four days. They keep a daily diary. And then came the writing of the letter to you.

"Each child contributed a few coppers toward buying the yarn for the sweater. As the money was brought in one child wrote the name of the child in a notebook and the number of coppers. At the end they all added it up and then counted his coppers to see if his accounts were right. A group of the children went to the store and helped the teacher pick out and buy the yarn.

"I am hoping that the pictures and the letter from the children themselves will be of interest to your group. The children

spent much of three days in talking over what they would put in the letter, and then in writing it. . . . The final copy was written by three different children. It was real interest on their part. You should have seen the joy with which they presented me with the final copy and asked me to send it on. They even wrote "American Primary School" on the envelope and asked me to finish out the address. However, I thought an English address would reach you better—besides, there may be more than one primary school in America!"

The messages and gifts from China made our children thoughtful—especially the pictures showing the other group at work on their doll house. "We should send them *our* picture, showing *us* at work on something," they said. With one group that was simple. A picture was already available of them at work on their "Church." This group began at once on a book to tell the Chinese children of all the interests in their class.

In the other group the letter actually started an enterprise. They were building nothing. What *could* they be doing in a picture which would be of interest in China? "We could build a city," they suggested, and at once entered a petition for help in Mrs. Guillett's work-shop. They suggested what buildings they needed in a city, and discussed the reasons. Certain ones which seemed important were far too difficult for them to construct, but Mrs. Guillett and her assistant surprised us one Sunday with perfect miniatures of the Chrysler Building and Riverside Church, leaving the painting for small hands to do on these and the other carton-buildings. The third picture (page 468) was taken in the workshop with the children busy at the painting.

Following is the letter which these children dictated to their Chinese friends. We hope it will be only one of a series of bright-colored strands shuttling back and forth across land and sea between kindergarten and High School days weaving themselves into a real friendship design of lasting stuff and durable colors!

"Dear little Chinese Friends:

"We enjoyed your letter. We are glad you like the doll we sent. We liked the pictures of your doll house. We have them on our chart board.

"We are making a city. We are sending you a picture of us making the city. We will tell you why we have these buildings in the city.

"We have an office building so the fathers have a place to work and earn money for their families. This office building is the Chrysler Building.

"We have a church so people can sing and pray and think about God.

"We have a flower shop because flowers make things pretty and make people happier.

"We have *International House,* where people from different countries can live together.

"We have an apartment house so families will have a place to live.

"We have *The Lighthouse for the Blind,* so blind people can learn to read and write and play and swim.

"We have *The Sheltering Arms* for children who don't have any fathers and mothers.

"We have a hospital to take care of sick people and people who get hurt.

"We have a store so people can buy things to eat and wear and have furniture in their homes.

"We have a library so people who can't buy books can get books to read and study.

"We put our buildings around a park so children could have a place to play.

"Your friends in America,

"The First Grade, Riverside Church, New York."

Worship

EDITOR'S NOTE: We are lifting this article from the Sept. 13th issue of "Horizons," which is the weekly publication of the Riverside Guild, our young people's organization in the Riverside Church. We are frequently asked about the young people's work and their services of worship. This article by Miss Martha Biehle, a member of the society, who is chairman of the Committee on Worship gives a first-hand presentation of the attitude and interest of the Guild in the matter of worship.

Worship—why does it interest us, in the Guild? Possibly because what one worships determines largely what one's life becomes. Therefore, where any group of people meet together, as do the members of the Riverside Guild, the object of their worship will help to determine what they as a group will do and be.

The act of worship seems to be the giving of one's self in humility, appreciation and longing to that which one regards as superior to oneself. Through that longing, that appreciation and that humility before a greater force, come to him who worships a new power and strength. Each one of us worships something—it may be money, or beauty, or truth, or physical strength, or material acquisitions. Whatever it is, by its absorption of the one who worships it, it moulds his life.

Watch the man who acknowledges the superiority of money over his personality, who craves the power which he believes money can give him, who makes the pursuit of material possessions his all-engrossing interest.

For us in the Riverside Church there is a phrase which has come, through its beauty and its frequent repetition, to be the underlying motif of our worship. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." The music of that lyric phrase sung by our choir and echoing in our being lifts us up the heights of the great Gothic vaults and on upward to reach toward what we know is Good.

"And they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." At once this opens out for us unlimited possibilities in worship. It leaves worship unrestricted to creeds or ceremonies or institutionalized forms. All of that which is of the highest we know is of the "spirit" of life—the intangible beauty of music, or art, or literature, the inexplicable power of unselfishness, of love and sacrifice, the compelling strength of great personality. If, then, the worship of the Highest Good and Beauty and Truth—of God as we know Him—is in the realm of the spirit, how closely identified it is to what we everyday experience in our finest moments. It is nothing which is relegated to certain days of the week or certain hours of the day.

Academically the question of what you or John or Mary worships may be uninteresting. But personally, vitally, intimately the question becomes your central problem. To what do you devote your life? Is it to Spiritual Force or to material possession? What you worship — the answer to this question—determines for you the trend of your life. It will mean for you all the difference between being a small, cramped, limited person and being an enriched, vital personality.

It is this which the Committee on Worship of the Guild has in mind in planning the services of worship for the coming year. As a Committee its chief interest is in providing for the members of the Guild the opportunity for their worship in a group. The Committee shall not attempt the impossible; it shall not pretend to worship for you. It shall hope to enlarge your opportunities as individuals for worshipping God "in spirit and in truth." M. H. B.

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Our Responsibility

Two departments have been added to the program activities of The Riverside Church during the past two years.

Miss Mary Downs has her office in the church where she regularly meets for interviews, counsel, and helpfulness the many people who are turning to us for relief of all sorts and kinds. Not a day passes but that finds Miss Downs grappling with real and serious problems in the lives of the people and the families who are brought to her attention.

Miss May Preuss is responsible for the heading up of our efforts in securing employment for those who turn to us with this particular need. What they are able to accomplish, however, would be impossible but for the cooperation of the members of the congregation who have responded liberally by way of furnishing work to be done.

At the same time that we are dealing as constructively as possible with cases of real want and dire distress there are coming to the surface at one point or another instances of appeals being made by people who are altogether unworthy. Just the other week a man showed up who eight years ago subjected many different groups of people in the city to very successful raids upon their sympathy and upon their financial help. He left a trail of bad checks behind him and now presumably has returned to this happy hunting-ground because he knows his derelictions of that time have been outlawed and he could not be legally dealt with.

If anyone approaches you here in the church or even in your home and uses the church for a background for an appeal for money, will you not please give the church through Miss Downs an opportunity to check up on the facts no matter how appealing the story may be? We do not ask this in order to deny anybody the help that is deserved. We are asking it rather that such help as is available may be reserved for those who actually need it and not dissipated upon people who have discovered a way to exploit the depression.